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ABSTRACT

Global interaction during the 19th and 20th centuries is examined by using an historical dialectic approach. Intervention is suggested in world affairs that will promote cooperation between developing and industrialized nations. The dialectical approach maintains that the status quo is constantly moving toward upheaval as a result of pressure for change emanating from inside the system. The author maintains that developing nations are exerting pressure on the western-dominated social system through demands for reform based on national sovereignity and autonomy. The hypothesis is that this western domination of global political, economic, cultural, and ideological affairs over the past several centuries has deprived people in developing nations of freedom and dignity. This domination is interpreted to have taken various forms including economic imperialism, political subjugation, and global management through cooperation among western nations. People interested in rectifying western domination should identify specific issues around which intervention can be initiated (such as development, peace, anti-militarism), envision desired future developments (such as socialist transformation), conceive relevant strategies for moving toward the envisioned future (such as international economic participation), and generate the necessary interventions from a variety of locations and in a variety of ways (such as encouraging countries to support international order). (DB)

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Towards A Just World

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RAJNI KOTHARI

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This paper is one in a series of working papers commissioned by the World Order Models Project in its effort to stimulate research, education, dialogue, and political action which will contribute to a movement for a just world order. The papers will deal with major global problems facing humanity, and particularly vexing contemporary political, economic, social, and cultural issues within an analytic and normative framework guided by the concepts and values of peace, economic well-being, social justice, and ecological stability. Special emphasis will be given to the necessity and feasibility of structural transformation of today's fragmented world in order to resolve these problems and achieve just world order results.

A Working Group of the World Order Models Project (WOMP) will use these papers in its new program aimed at publishing a statement in 1980 outlining the strategies for realizing just world order during this century. We invite interested individuals throughout the globe to respond to the various papers either directly to the individual authors or to WOMP. These communications will figure significantly in the WOMP Working Group's final statement. Where appropriate, the responses and critiques will be published in *Alternatives: A Journal of World Policy*.

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TOWARDS A JUST WORLD

Rajni KOTHARI*

If about 200 years ago history took a new turn (leading to the global domination -- political, economic, cultural and ideological – of the West), it is now again ripe for a new turn (as the result of its unfolding). But the turn cannot be taken without human intervention any more than it was taken 200 years ago. Indeed, intervention is being actively made through various strategems by the beneficiaries, and therefore guardians, of the *status quo*. To counter this, the paper proposes the kind of intervention that will demolish the existing structures of in-built violence, inequity, domination and insensate exploitation both of vast sections of humanity and of nature, and pave the way for the emergence of a world that is humane and just, peaceful and secure, and one that ensures to all human entities no less than to individuals a livable life of dignity and freedom. A strategy for such intervention must be based on a correct understanding of the dialectic of the historical process to avoid the pitfall of utopian model-building, identify the forces wanting or needing and working for change, fuse them into a strong global coalition, and identify the points where interventions can be successfully made to bring about the desired change.

Introduction

We seem to be on the threshold of a new epoch in world history. It is not certain that it will be crossed in a manner that will lead to a sane and humane world and not to one that is sinister, and inimical to, the dignity and autonomy of diverse human entities. Crossing it so that the first kind of world is ensured calls for a vision based on a firm grasp of the historical process – with its unfolding dialectic and future possibilities – and a capacity to intervene so as to translate such possibilities into reality. Above all, it will call for the forging of a coalition for change that spans various regions and political

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systems and is able to identify specific issues around which interventions can be initiated, and one, too, that is capable of conceiving relevant strategies for moving toward the envisioned future, and then enlisting a set of actors that would generate the necessary interventions from a variety of locations and vantage points. This essay deals with these various components of a design for an alternative future.

There is bound to be a great deal of resistance to such a process of change. There exists a powerful constellation of interests with a wide-ranging structure and still occupying a dominant position in access to resources and institutions that would oppose any basic change in the existing arrangement of human affairs. Such resistance is in many ways unrealistic in that it reflects an insensitivity to the far-reaching historical process that is already under way, but it is wholly understandable; for this constellation has so much at stake in the prevailing order with its deeply ingrained structure of interests and a widely shared *mystique*. Both the alignment of interests and the mystique have acquired tremendous power and can evoke a great deal of sentiment and loyalty for the prevailing order. It is an order that has not only been a going concern for some time now; it is also rooted in a phenomenal unfoldment of history in the last two hundred years before which the whole of earlier human history appears far too fragmentary, diffuse and without an immanent thrust or purpose.

The process of 200-year history

The last two hundred years, beginning with the Industrial Revolution in the West, and its colonial expansion throughout the globe, have been marked by a fundamental civilizational drive, informed by a clear doctrine based on the European enlightenment, the theory of progress, and the idea of secular history. Arising from a dualism between the secular and the spiritual, the idea was subsequently legitimized by the conquest of a larger and larger domain of man's nature and territory through a materialist interpretation of science and technology. This doctrine released tremendous energy and led, among other things, to a superiority in armaments and the art of warfare which proved critical in extending the frontiers of Western civilization and its normative framework to cover almost the entire globe.

This entailed a new conception of universalism. The old universalistic conceptions – found in China, India, the ancient Greece and Turkey, in the thinking of the Buddha and the Zoroastrian teachers – were all, despite their considerable diversities, based on the transcendence of the immediate, the local and the temporal through the cultivation of the mind and a search for

comprehension and meaning in an admittedly mysterious and complex reality, and led to a moderation and containment of selfish and expansionist drives in the human personality. By contrast, the modernist conception of universalism that emerged in the West was based on the expansion of a local civilization and on dominance over the rest of the world, legitimized by a belief in the manifest destiny that was peculiar to Judeo-Christian religiosity in the post-medieval age.

The Western imperial thrust that was stimulated by modern technology and the accompanying economic expansion as well as by a psychological urge arising from a conviction of racial superiority was, in turn, supported and spurred on by the balance of power in Europe. It thus extended the competitive ethos of the growth of capital and territory at home to the exploration, acquisition and consolidation of colonial empires abroad. The result was global domination by European state power and its economic infrastructure. Indeed, modern European imperialism represents the first major effort at unifying the entire globe under the dominion of a single regional centre. Though the rise of Prussia and Bismarck's clever manipulation of the Congress of Vienna system produced internal crises within this edifice (which eventually led to two world wars and the shift of the locus of imperial power from continental Europe to the United States), the basic momentum generated by superior technology and superior armaments – and, of course, by cultural penetration during and after the colonial period – still persists and has, if anything, made Western domination a far deeper reality than ever before.

Inner contradictions

And yet, it was from the very dynamics of this revolutionary upheaval and the enormous historical drive from one regional centre out into the whole world that its dialectic also emerged. This has given rise to entirely new forces that have already begun to erode the stability of the prevailing structure of world power and threaten to put an end to the era of Western domination. Such a dialectic was inherent in the Europe-based world model. Any system which is based on expansion, domination and forced homogenization (unlike one that is based on restraint, harmony and respect for diversity) must give rise to inner contradictions and imbalances. In the European case, the dialectic developed along three lines.

1. States system. First, the states system, based on a 'balance of power' which was itself unstable and lasted only until the rise of national consciousness in central and eastern Europe, generated an altogether new dynamic, and the highly uneven growth of imperialism abroad upset the balance of forces

within Europe. The rise of Germany, Italy and resurgent nationalisms in the Eastern backwaters of the European establishment gave a jolt to the states system then prevailing and, in the end, weakened its staying power. The October Revolution in Russia undermined its *raison d'etre* and ushered in a new era of world politics. The anti-colonial heritage of America and its growing economic might further, and in a way decisively, contributed to this.

2. Economic imperialism. Second, the acquisitive and competitive ethos of European secular culture and a narrowly economic impulse to universalism produced a scramble for material advancement of a highly parochial kind, both in the outlying empires and at home. Economic universalism provided the spur to modern imperialism which went on a rampage and turned the colonies, over which they had acquired political dominion, into captive production centres providing raw materials and indentured labour – and slaves and serfs – and captive markets for European manufactured goods (whose production rose at fantastic rates, thanks to the miracles of technological growth). In the process, they undermined indigenous industrial traditions and implanted in their place a totally new economic model.

Two results followed from such a design of exploitative imperialism, one abroad and the other at home. With the collapse of the local economy and the introduction of minimum necessary health and education facilities of the modern type (for ensuring cheap colonial labour), there accumulated in the colonies a huge back-log of adult population for whom there was no economic function. Providing the barest minimum of livelihood and security for them became a massive burden either on the colonial exchequer (as, for instance, in India) or on the coercive machinery of the colonial state (as in most parts of Africa). Meanwhile, there emerged a local entrepreneurial class (whose interests conflicted directly with the colonials) and a local educated class (which received the Western doctrines of liberalism, nationalism and socialism positively and used them against the colonials). The rising cost of administering the colonies and the nationalist awakening of the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia in the vast land masses of Africa and Asia together turned the 'glorious' empires into eyesores which led the imperialists into a protracted process of negotiations aimed at conceding independence but retaining economic and indirect political control.

At home, the easy availability of cheap and plentiful raw materials and new sources of energy and transportation – from each of which, incidentally, European business made huge fortunes – prompted the adoption of a new industrial culture, applying more and more capital and labour-saving technology and transforming a slow-moving industrial revolution into an economy of affluence. This led to another remarkable result for the West: the containment of class conflicts by extending the benefits of imperialism to

the labouring classes at home. This was given the name of welfare state. The Marxist scenario of revolutionary upheaval in the centres of capitalism failed to materialize largely because of this.[1]

On the other hand, thanks to the availability of cheap and plentiful raw materials from the colonies and incredibly expanding markets for consumer goods, largely at home but also abroad, it became possible to introduce capital-intensive and labour-displacing technology without affecting employment at home, except for temporary setbacks occasioned by the trade cycle. The Westerner went over with gusto to the new culture of affluence – indeed, he encouraged it by aggressive salesmanship – cutting across class boundaries. It was much later that he realized how dependent he had become on the erstwhile colonies. By this time the age of imperialism had drawn to a close and a new mode of Western domination, based on technology and armaments, had begun.

3. Clash of ideologies. Contributing very significantly to these emerging countervailing forces was the third mode of the European dialectic: the dialectic of ideas. Building in part on earlier traditions of emotional protest and romantic revulsion against the capitalist mode of material civilization, there took place the Marxist rebellion in the Western thought process. This marked the great watershed of modern history. Though philosophically firmly rooted in the Western secular mode of thought, Marx provided a vision of the future and a method of getting there that had a special appeal to oppressed people everywhere. Indeed, in course of time the new doctrine and philosophy travelled abroad and found converts in non-Western settings. It facilitated the emergence of new modes of organizing state power – in the Soviet land mass, in Eastern Europe, in China, in Cuba, in Vietnam, and in many an emergent polity struggling against the racial and economic vestiges of colonialism – based on an alternative model of civil society which, in course of time, produced a different kind of world altogether. But this was still in respect more of the internal structure of national societies than of relations between them, though undoubtedly it changed the latter too. The change occurred in three important ways: first, by bringing more than a third of mankind under the communist ideological spectrum; second, by lending substantial support to national elites committed to put an end to dependence on the West; and, third, by a partial and often discreet but nonetheless growing convergence of efforts between the socialist countries and the countries of the Third World. All three processes are still under way.

[1]It was not an accident that the Western countries which had failed to benefit from economic imperialism – Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal – failed to develop a democratic polity and were able to preserve capitalist economies and avert revolutions only through resort to fascism.

Together, the three modes of historical dialectic described above – in the central fulcrum of power, in the underlying economic structures, and in the normative–ideological superstructure – have released forces that have been slowly converging to bring about a qualitative transformation in the world system.

The tolling of the bell for the Western era

The main import of this transformation is to be seen in the modification and gradual erosion of the West–dominated world system. The rise of Germany, a child of the nationalist creed born in the European cradle and heir to the anti-revolutionary creed of the European Alliance, undermined the fine balance on which the European states system was based. The Russian Revolution dealt a more serious blow at a deeper level by projecting an alternative social order as well as a polar alternative in world politics. The end of World War II saw both the rise of Soviet power in world affairs and the rise of a new wave of nationalism in Asia and Africa putting an end to empires and challenging the hegemonistic designs of the old world order. The spread of communism to Eastern Europe and China made it a 'spectre' that really began to 'haunt' the West, which, with the shift of the locus of power from the European cultural zone to America, lost its earlier poise and restraint and collided with the new world forces, ending in the Vietnam debacle.

Alongside all this, anti–colonialism has been transformed from a broad political front for national liberation movements into a global trade union of Third World countries struggling to change the global distribution of resources and restructure the world economic and technological order. This is already producing some important modifications in inter–regional balances. Despite the frustrations of the North–South dialogue, and despite the tactical 'convergence' represented by the US–USSR detente, the world seems to be moving decisively towards a diffuse and diversified structure.

Meanwhile, the supreme confidence in the rightness of the Western path has been shaken in the West itself. The ecological crisis and the 'limits to growth' debate, the precipitous decline in the legitimacy of the doctrine of economic growth (which has only served to globalize the European class conflict by shoving it off to other regions), deep doubts about the philosophical premises of modern science, and the steady uncovering of the racist tendency in the Western psyche – all have led to a fundamental questioning of values and assumptions held to be valid for so long. Such questioning, now spreading beyond intellectual circles, has set in motion a process of psychological erosion, a basic decline in the legitimacy of institutions, a growth in fundamental dissent from the basic postulates of Western civilization, culminating

in the search for an alternative framework of ordering human relations. This uneasy period in world history is characterized by a combination of a slowly evolving crisis of confidence in the prevailing system and a growing sense of some impending transformations in it.

Such a general consciousness of historical mutation (at the moment perhaps confined to the thinking strata) is also buttressed by concrete evidence of transformation along several dimensions: a fast changing economic scenario of major world regions; far-reaching demographic changes, not just in the population size but also in respect of a radical restructuring of age compositions and of large movements of population across regions; a fundamental reorientation in technological balances and their impact on human ecology and the biosphere; an equally fundamental reorientation in energy needs and in the availability and distribution of material resources; new directions in the diffusion of military and political power; and powerful new cultural configurations and encounters.

There is as yet no certainty, however, where the totality of these changes (and the larger transformation involved in their mutual intertwining) will lead the world. They could conceivably lead to a world that feels more peaceful and secure as a result of becoming more decentralized and just, following a period of negotiated settlement of major sources of conflict and informed by mature statesmanship at regional and global levels. But it could also lead to a world racked by increasing turbulence, a greater sense of insecurity among the major centres of power – and hence to a further tightening of the structures of domination and domestic repression – producing in their wake an intensification of the arms race and militarization of regimes, encouraging regional conflagrations, and setting the stage for an eventual global holocaust.

Responses to the impending change

Needless to say, almost all those concerned would like to avoid the latter scenario, or, at any rate, extreme manifestations of it. But there seems to be little agreement on how to avoid it. There is some, though by no means universal, agreement that the age of a relatively homogeneous and stable world based on domination from one regional centre – the West – is coming to an end and that a new framework of relations between major regions of the world has become necessary. But there seems to be hardly any consensus on the nature of the new framework. The dominant Western powers themselves look at it in one way; the newly emerging powers - namely, the countries of the Third World – look at it in quite a different way. The Soviet Union's view of it is different from both and, in turn, affects the perspective

of other important powers – above all, of China. The Soviet Union's view is conditioned by two opposite pulls: its stake in maintaining the bipolar system of world management and security, and, in the process, containing China; and its desire to bend large sections of the non–Western world into enabling it to increase its influence in world affairs, and hence its position in the bipolar system. In a fundamental way, however, the Third World, China, and the Soviet Union and its allies are, in their very different ways, pitched against the Western alliance.

We shall examine the Soviet position and its points of convergence and divergence from the Third World later in this paper. More critical from our point of view, however, is the Western response to the changing world situation. This is so because the world as we know it today was shaped by it in a fundamental way, because it is still the more dominant of various world centres, because it still happens to be the nerve–centre of global communications, technology and strategic doctrine, and because it is the pace–setter of things, given its preponderant position in access to the world economic surplus. The manner in which it responds to present and emerging changes in the world scene can thus prove decisive for the future of the world.

Western response

Creation of a 'world order'. The Western response consists of a combination of two modes of expression, one in rhetoric (which in itself is suggestive and, in fact, *could* represent a shift in thinking), the other in Realpolitik, i.e. in terms of policies designed to preserve the *status quo* through minimal adjustments to a changing situation.

The new rhetoric is couched in the language of 'world order', consisting of three main dimensions: a common 'Trilateral' front between the US, Western Europe and Japan, providing the inner core of stability in a fast changing world; involvement of the more powerful among the Third World countries in a system of global management and sharing of power and prosperity; and, of course, continuation of detente with the Soviet Union as a necessary condition for the pursuit of both Trilateralism and partnership with the Third World (and, indeed, of more ambitious aims like undercutting Soviet influence in Third World regions and penetrating the Soviet zone of power in Eastern Europe and elsewhere). It is a language that appears to shift the emphasis from bipolar hegemony over the world for the pursuit of national interest to one that thinks in terms of a 'world order' based on recognition of a changing reality, and to enter into a partnership with major countries in the Third World to bring such a 'world order' about.

It is important to grasp the thinking underlying this new language of global

management. In part it is a continuation of, and in part a shift from, the earlier Nixon–Kissinger approach of a three-power concert (US, USSR, China, with Western Europe and Japan thrown in as US partners) through which the tensions of the world are sought to be managed, defused or simply held at bay. It continues the old approach in that it is still a managerial response to a changing structure of world power. At the same time, it represents a shift from the earlier approach in that it is not sanguine about the Soviet Union's intentions, and also in that it relies less on the capacity of the US to topple uncomfortable regimes abroad or on the doctrine of limited wars (both having been shattered by the Vietnam war) and more on other means to protect Western interests. It is thus more realistic about the potential power of the Third World, and that is why it seeks to co-opt major centres instead of simply trying to quarantine the centre powers from the 'peripheries' of the world.

The rhetoric of world order is meant to further this new approach to maintain the *status quo*. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the new language has sought to gain legitimacy from a radically different and far more idealistic school of thinking in the US which is committed to world order. The latter has been urging an end to the nation-state system and, with it, the arms race, the utilization of world resources and technology for the fulfilment of basic needs of all human beings, the promotion of social justice and the generation of an ecologically balanced process of development – and global governance for undertaking these tasks. It is interesting to note how, in a period of imperial retreat, new legitimization is sought from dissident sources, how the paranoid strains in national culture converge with idealistic strains in the same culture to produce an apparently new ideology in the defence of old interests.

Underlying both the concert-of-powers approach of Nixon and Kissinger and the 'world-order' approach of Carter and Brzezinski is a historic reality which neither of them could ignore. This is the signal of the end of American dominance which had followed the collapse of European imperialism. By the end of the sixties, the US lost its strategic monopoly. Soon thereafter came the end of American dominance over world capitalism, heralded by the rise of Japanese and European economic power and the decline of the dollar. The capacity of the US to intervene in the Third World whenever a government or a movement (or a leader) was found uncomfortable – and, if necessary, to topple either – also came to an end with the Vietnam debacle. Vietnam put an end to the doctrine of limited wars in which the US could directly engage to maintain hegemony; henceforth the job had to be done by collaborators round the world. Finally, Vietnam undermined national consensus *within* the US which was so necessary to pursue a forward foreign policy. The need thus arose of finding

a new basis for national acceptance of America's world role.

The response to such a retreat on so many fronts came in two stages. The first was conceived by Henry Kissinger who brilliantly drew upon the American cultural mix of doing good to the world and remaining on top of it. 'Stability with peace' was the watchword of the Kissinger policy. It was a policy of containing not so much communism as the Soviet Union itself and, as part of that strategy, an opening up to China, on the one hand, and pacification of the Middle East, on the other (the US becoming the chief arbiter in Middle East affairs). Having succeeded in turning East-West ideological rivalry into a straight game of power, which spanned across ideological divisions (with Washington being the main balancer of a new concert of powers), Kissinger could afford to ignore the sensibilities of the Third World. Indeed, he dealt with it rather contemptuously (as with India during the Bangladesh crisis and, later, with Chile) and generally had no qualms in supporting repressive regimes and subverting democratic ones in the developing world.

Kissinger's moves proved too short-lived, however, and could not stand either the longer-term effects of OPEC, the tumultuous developments in Africa (starting with Angola), or even in the Middle East, when Israel failed to play Sparta to Rome or when the Shah of Iran displayed ambitions to get bigger than his boots. Meanwhile, Kissinger had alienated Japan, alarmed his West European allies, and he paid no attention to arresting the decline of US economic power - a process that had been under way for more than a decade – in cooperation with US allies.

By the time the Carter administration came to power, the rhetoric of peace and stability appeared unworkable, the Soviet Union having been found too difficult to manage within the concert-of-powers concept. On the other hand, the assertion of the Third World, following OPEC, and the shift in economic power to Western Europe, Japan and West Asia meant that the rest of the world could not be taken for granted, either. The conditions for continuing US primacy had drastically altered.

The Kissinger approach showed clearly how, faced by a fast changing global reality, the 'Number One' nation of the world was desperately trying to follow old goals by manipulating new situations. Under Carter and his Trilateral advisers, who never gave up the ambition of continuing to be 'Number One', three major tactical shifts are noticeable. Some of these shifts had, in fact, started under Ford and found expression in Kissinger's statements towards the end of his tenure as Secretary of State.

First, peace has ceased to be the principal watchword, and its place has been taken by human rights. Second, the politics of detente is slowly giving place to a frank espousal of the politics of antagonistic collaboration – accepting a common interest in limiting superpower confrontation in the

battlefield, but also accepting superpower competition in regional power balances. Third, there is the policy of regional flanks for both strategic and economic purposes, under which certain selected countries in different regions are armed to the teeth. These are countries in which the multinationals have invested their huge capital – Brazil, Chile, Iran (till recently), Saudi Arabia, Zaire, South Korea, Indonesia. It is this convergence of strategic and economic interests and their global reach through a worldwide military-industrial complex (in which several ruling elites act as surrogates of an imperial power in pursuit of a global design in return for their becoming regional overlords) that constitutes the new *Pax Americana.*

New corporatism. Such a package of response under the rhetoric of 'world order' to the transformation taking place in the world represents a doctrine of global management and provides the framework for Realpolitik. This Realpolitik is, in some ways, far more pervasive in its approach to world power than was the policy of global encirclement through military pacts during the Cold War, or even Kissinger's policy of stridently playing Metternich through a global oligarchy of powers. In one way, it is the first truly global convergence of elites based on a conscious role for world capitalism, on the one hand, and a frightening willingness to use military means to defend Western interests, on the other.

The vision of 'world order' that informs such a strategy is one of a corporate world society consisting of (a) a global network of economic enterprises set up by multinational corporations in command of high technology, enormous funds for R&D and an array of experts and managers produced in the techno-centres of the world and 'transferred' to its peripheries (sought to be integrated into a 'world economy' by making them dependent on that technology); (b) a states system monitored by supranational centres and administered by regional overlords who would provide order and stability in their respective regions and hold the 'forces of chaos and revolution' at bay; (c) a corresponding structure of strategic and military power for providing regimes of security in the various regions; (d) a globally co-ordinated network of intelligence agencies that would safeguard the interests of this corporate structure of political and economic power; and (e) a system of information and communication media that spreads a 'culture' of thought and behaviour that facilitates structures of domination and undermines local autonomy and diversity. The basic thrust of this world order comes from a comprehensive cultural process of homogenization of human aspirations, based on standardized inputs of education, technology, management and coercion, and co-ordinated through a vertical structure of governance that would envelop all the regions of the world. It is an order that would enable all nations (which prove their eligibility through co-operation rather than confrontation with the West) to partake

of the 'peace and plenty' which modern technology has made possible and which the West has already achieved.

Behind such an all-encompassing thrust to 'order' the world – a world that is fast slipping from under conventional means of control and manipulation – lies a deep sense of fear and anxiety. It derives from the perception of a growing economic challenge from the South and of the possibility of a decline in living standards in the West despite its technological, military and strategic superiority. This perception was at its strongest immediately following the economic ascendancy of the OPEC, which stimulated a measure of confidence among the Third World elites (who tended to close ranks despite the immediate economic hardship that the rise in oil prices caused to most non-oil-producing Third World countries, especially those of the so-called 'Fourth World'). Since then it has evaporated to some extent, thanks largely to the co-optive capacities of Western capitalism, which we shall presently discuss, but it still exists and, as we shall show later, is likely to produce more menacing forms.

Militarization and global dominance. The manner in which the Western powers have dealt with the economic challenge of the Third World provides yet another instance of the remarkable staying power of the prevailing 'system' and its periodic rejuvenation by shifting the means employed to achieve the same old goals. The crisis posed by the 'challenge from the South', following the solidarity of the members of OPEC and the consequent stimulation of a wider solidarity among Third World countries, produced considerable nervousness in the advanced capitalist countries. They found themselves 'dependent' on the developing world – incidentally, equally suddenly making them conscious of the fact that we now lived in an age of 'interdependence'. The same crisis also underlined the crucial importance of military and strategic power, which was presumed to have been of no avail in dealing with the group of OPEC but which, in fact, got a new lease of life.

This has happened because, in pacifying the sources of challenge from the South, the technological and military power of the North has played a very major role in several ways. One was the oft-mentioned induction of petro-dollars into the financial institutions and investment trusts of the West. Another was the sustained and painstaking diplomatic effort by Mr. Kissinger on the Arab-Israeli front, which made the United States the arbiter of the Middle East conflict and prepared the ground for amity in place of hostility in the relations between the US and the Arab countries. But equally important, perhaps even more important, for understanding the world order conceived in Washington was the unprecedented spurt in arms sales to the Middle East, its growing militarization, and the transport of not just military hardware but a large number of military personnel, ancillary

industrial installations, and training and consulting infrastructures as well. There has also been a large-scale export of Western technology and the culture of conspicuous consumption that goes with it.

The economic challenge that 1973 posed has thus been met by deploying the military and technological power of the highly industrialized countries in the *nouveau riche* societies. And the new sense of power and autonomy that was generated in the wake of the new-found riches has been channelled into the acquisition of new symbols and artifacts of national grandeur that once again have made these countries dependent states. The same processes have been at work in meeting the challenge of the ascendant countries in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. In all these regions diplomatic manoeuvres, economic penetration through multinationals, political subversion of uncomfortable regimes, and hard-headed economic bargaining for maintaining favourable terms of trade for the dominant nations (in the face of increases in oil and commodity prices) have been employed; but it is the induction of armaments, with the concomitant culture of militarization, that has ensured the perpetuation of the global *status quo*. As this kind of penetration spreads wider and becomes systemic to the structure of global management, the dominant role of military power in the design of the states system is likely to increase.

New threat perceptions. Yet, despite the success of the United States and other Western industrialized countries in containing the economic and political consequences of OPEC after 1973, concern and anxiety still prevail in the establishment circles in these countries over the growing 'challenge from the South' which, in the coming decades, might pose a threat to the maintenance and continuous rise in the living standards of their people, upset the balance on which the present system of power relations rests, and ultimately erode the long-established supremacy of the West in world affairs.

Such a perception of threat (reflecting the long-standing habit of dominating and conceiving of domination as the only way of managing an unequal and divided world) springs from the fear of emerging shifts in global magnitudes and relationships which might produce a scenario of uncertainty and conflict in the years and decades to come. The indicators of such a perception are:

(a) the 'menace' of population growth;

(b) the growing demand from other regions of the world for a greater share in world resources, a large proportion of which is located in the developing regions;

(c) the quickening of industrial growth in these regions and the effect of this – and of comparative advantage in production costs – competition for the world market;

(d) the diffusion of sophisticated technology to these regions and their acquisition of nuclear power;

(e) the unprecedented level of 'mobilization' in these regions consequent on the growth of middle-class nationalism, of education, and of large cities;

(f) the consequent pressure of all these on the environment and on the availability of agricultural, forest and fossil surpluses so necessary for keeping the wheels of industry moving in the developed world and for preserving its present life-style;

(g) the inevitable growth in competition for scarce resources in the wake of all this within and between societies; and

(h) the serious strains which the cumulative impact of these developments entail for 'stability' everywhere and the possibility of a breakdown of the existing 'world order'.

Such a perception of threat, and the need to evolve contingency plans against it, are clearly set forth in a recent report by the Rand Corporation.[2] While the focus of the report is on strategic doctrine, it prognosticates an economic and political conflict between the industrialized North and the developing South. It is representative of many other statements emanating from the United States since 1973. According to this prognosis, the conflict between the North and the South goes far beyond the impact of the fourfold rise in oil prices and is an 'expression of a much deeper conflict' based on 'the political mobilization of the Third World, following several centuries of Western dominance'. Consequently, it views the demand for 'New International Economic Order' (NIEO) as essentially a political demand, 'aiming at a major modification of the power relations between the former colonial powers, which are at present the most advanced industrial societies, and the former colonies, which are still in the early stages of modernization and industrialization'. Instead of viewing this as a natural culmination of a long historical process, the Rand Report, like many other expressions of Western response to the rise of the Third World, views it as something that must somehow be resisted. And the reason it advances for such resistance is couched in demagogic overtones characteristic of so much of American diplomatese ever since the Sixth Special Session of the UN General Assembly: the American people expect their government to protect their economic position. 'Nations, like individuals, do not divest themselves voluntarily of their accumulated wealth and of their sources of income merely in response to moral appeals', it says, and then goes on to add that 'the American people

[2]The report is based on a study conducted by the Rand Corporation for the US Department of Defense. It is entitled *Military Implications of a Possible World Order Crisis in the 1980s: A Project Air Force Report Prepared for the United States Air Force.*

will probably expect their government to negotiate from a position of strength'.

The American argument that the Third World demand for NIEO is expressed in economic terms but is, in essence, a design at changing power relations can be turned against the US. It would run like this: in the garb of maintaining its standard of living, the US is seeking to preserve its political and strategic hegemony.

In reality, however, the specious economic argument by the US is a clever subterfuge for a deeper design – namely, the maintenance of supremacy in global power relations and, hence necessarily, in the global structure of strategic and military balances. The Rand report states this quite bluntly:

> As a superpower cast by history in a role of world leadership, the United States would be expected to use its military force to prevent the total collapse of the world order or, at least, to protect specific interests of American citizens in the absence of an international rule of law.
>
> Such contingencies might generate military requirements without precedent in the experience of American military planners, who may not yet fully comprehend the significance of events that are already happening, such as the intersection between the old East-West conflict, the new North-South conflict, and the accelerating consequences of planetary mismanagement.
>
> More attention may have to be devoted to the development of doctrine, plans, weapons, and force structures in anticipation of possible uses of military force in some novel crisis situations. The American people may demand that its national interests be protected by all available means if global turbulence prevails in the 1980s.
>
> The military posture implications of such a situation are not self-evident. If a harsh international environment were to develop in the 1980s, additional military capabilities might be required besides the forces directly dedicated to Soviet and other well-understood contingencies.

Deep schism: dismal prospects

The Rand report is perhaps no more than an exercise in contingency planning as well as in the development of US strategic doctrine. The reason for citing it here is that the political analysis on which it is based is shared fairly widely in the West and underlies the grand strategy of erecting a 'world order' that provides the main ideological thrust of US foreign policy. If such be the perception of threat from the rise of the countries of the Third World after a long period of suppression and tutelage, and if such be the calculated response to it, one can see the depth of the schism facing humanity. No amount of world order rhetoric can hide the reality of this schism.

Such a 'world order' militates, not only against the values of peace and human dignity, but also against the crying need to concentrate all efforts

and resources on urgent tasks facing humanity: providing human beings everywhere with basic necessities; discovering new sources of energy and new forms of technology; preserving the environment, the sea-beds and the outer space from destruction in the race for political and technological hegemony; and many others. Given the pursuit of hegemony in a world undergoing rapid transformation, and given its inevitable stress on militarization of the globe as a means of restoring dependency relationships, the prospects facing humanity seem to be dismal.

Particularly dim are the prospects of peace and harmony in such a world. This is not simply a function of the spread of military culture round the world, though no doubt such a culture militates against an atmosphere of peace and harmony. The roots of a peaceless world lie deeper: in the socio-political structure of the world. For 'peace' – unless it emanates from, and is rooted in, a social structure widely seen to be just and fair – can be highly stultifying and repressive of the forces of change and reconstruction. Those strongly entrenched in a given social and political order have always wanted peace so that the 'order' they preside over may endure and remain unchallenged. Those not so entrenched, including both the newly-ascendant and the as-yet deprived, want peace on the basis of justice and a share in power and decision-making. For, in their view, a structure of inequity and exploitation is the primary source of conflict and violence.

These observations apply as much to the international order as to the national and regional ones. It is a characteristic of the world we live in that the structure of inequity extends to both socio-economic and politico-strategic dimensions. It is a situation of cumulative inequity in which a fantastic command over instruments of violence and military power supports both a system of economic and political domination globally and a framework of privileged elites and repressive regimes locally. The basic design of the 'world order' that is sought to be organized includes both these dimensions. Indeed, neither could endure without the other. Each needs the other desperately; for both of them feel threatened with erosion in the wake of fundamental changes. Their hope is that they could somehow stem the tide through a process of convergence at the top.

Towards a politics of transformation

What are the prospects of restructuring the world economic and political order in the face of what we have described as a situation of cumulative inequity? Are the developing countries doomed to a permanent state of dependence – economic, political and military and, hence, also in respect

of distribution of natural resources, sources of energy, and technology, as well as in respect of their own culture and identity? The prospects of an alternative world system based on the twin principles of justice and non-violence will depend crucially on the answers to these questions.

Working out the dialectic

The answers to these questions will depend very much on the capacity of both newly enfranchised states – still emerging from a colonial past and still struggling to achieve an independence based on national autonomy and economic self-reliance – and independent groups and movements in these as well as other societies to engage in a concerted effort against the 'world order' pictured above. There should be no illusion about this being an easy process in any way. Those who believe that just because modern communications and technology have produced the conditions of a more integrated world, such a world will in fact come about, and those who romantically look for a 'world community' in the middle of all the tensions and divisions are simply living in a world of make-believe. Any conception of a new world system, if it is to be realistically conceived, must be based on a perception of the conflicts that are inherent in the situation and the struggle that lies ahead.

On the other hand, those who throw their hands up in despair or feel overwhelmed by the forces of strife and evil that abound seem to underrate the dialectic that these very forces are already generating, a dialectic that will unfold more steadily and continuously as the growing awareness of both the inequity and the instability of the present system leads to a determined intervention in the historical process. There is little ground for complacency in the present situation, but there is no cause for fatalism either.

Even the process of erecting a 'world order' according to the perceptions and prescriptions of Western strategists must contend with several opposite tendencies. For what is being sought after is a global system of privilege and power, based on co-opting the elites of the Third World in a global corporate structure through transfer of technology and armaments. The 'interdependent' order thus erected will be expected to suppress forces of anarchy and revolution round the world. This is basically a highly defensive and, in some ways, a desperate model seeking to preserve a system that has become vulnerable and unstable and is beset with contradictions.

Identifying contradictions

First of all, note has to be taken of the fact that at the heart of this system

there is tension between the old-fashioned ideologues, keen to maintain Western supremacy by rallying to the cause of regimes like Rhodesia, South Africa and Israel, and pragmatic liberals willing to abandon these and to come to terms with the new facts of international life to make the best of it. The nature of American domestic politics, on the one hand, and the nature of the Palestinian question, on the other, as well as the close linkage between American security interests in the Indian Ocean and the white regime in South Africa generate compulsions that do not afflict other Western nations. This gives rise to tension within the Western world itself. Added to this is the growing divergence between the United States and other major centres of world capitalism, Japan and Western Europe, referred to earlier. The dominant position of US economic power in the world has declined with the rising cost of maintaining its imperial role. The defeat in Vietnam, the devaluation of the dollar in 1971, and the growing challenge from Japan and Western Europe seriously undermined the system created by the United States, and its capacity to influence the actions of others has suffered a steep decline. The divergence has grown further with the assertion of the Third World following the OPEC action in 1973.

Second, there is tension between the imperial core of the new 'inter-dependent' order and the new elites that are sought to be accommodated in it. Thus even 'stooges' have been keen to maintain an independent stance. The Shah of Iran, for example, saw great advantage in maintaining close links with other Asian and Third World powers; even the age-old rivalry between Iran and Iraq was undergoing some imaginative rethinking and readjustment. Similarly, the Saudis, traditional opponents of the Palestinians, have been under pressure for accepting the claims of the latter. The Saudis are certainly more conservative and keen on the American connection, but other oil-producing centres have shown greater independence and will not allow the Saudis to stray too far away from the OPEC establishment. In fact, the Saudis are engaged in a role that is at once conservative and progressive. While seeking to preserve what remains of the old international order, they have also been forging an Islamic front that is aimed – in part, of course – against the liberals and the leftists in the Arab world but essentially against Israel, the outpost of the West in West Asia and an ally of the US. Iran itself, armed to the hilt by the US, actually turned out to be increasingly less pliable to Western influence even under the Shah. Even so, the Shah was still seen as an agent of reaction and was swept off by one of the most dramatic populist revolutions of our time. It was a revolution that would perhaps have more far-reaching consequences internationally than domestically. Just as Vietnam put an end to the doctrine of limited wars, Iran may well put an end to the doctrine of collaborative imperialism.

Third, there is growing pressure from the Third World intellectuals and

significant segments of even the ruling elites for a closing of ranks among the governments of the Third World. Several factors are contributing to this. The non-oil-producing and poorer among the Third World societies have shown considerable capacity for solidarity despite hardship. This is beginning to bring returns in the shape of a series of bilateral pacts and the creation of special funds. Some South and Southeast Asian countries have been enabled to export man-power and manufacturing and machine goods.

Again, despite the recycling of petro-dollars into Western investments and arms sales, a massive shift in capital and financial resources has taken place within the oil-producing societies and their neighbourhoods (in West Asia, Southeast Asia, West Africa and Latin America). This will have many consequences. The growth of welfare states in hitherto feudal and hierarchical societies, the pressure for greater equality within these states involving structural changes hitherto unheard of, the anomaly between a globally progressive position and a domestically elitist and repressive policy, and in all this the example and the role of technologically, educationally and politically advanced countries within the Third World – all are producing a new structure of collaboration covering various aspects of national and regional development. There seems to be a growing and widely shared sentiment against multinationals and against the West, especially America. Combined with the growth of democratic movements in these countries, all this is likely to add up to a growing ferment in the very societies on whose cooperation the Western-dominated 'world order' is supposed to be based.

In fact, the whole concept of order and stability depending on a structure of management supported by the induction of the newly powerful into a pre-existing order is no longer valid, apart from being offensive to basic values and the dignity of diverse entities. The concept underrates two major movements that are gaining in power and momentum. One is the counter-assertion of national sovereignty and autonomy of hitherto suppressed and exploited societies. This constitutes the next phase in the evolution of the states system. The other is the growing delegitimization of the basic institutions and assumptions of social order that grew out of Western industrial capitalism and technology. The transformations that are inherent in the present historical stage can be steered towards a new order only by recognizing both these forces and moving towards a new political structure of the world based on the autonomy of diverse nations and a just social order based on a non-capitalist path of techno-economic development.

What we face, then, is a combination of objective changes in the world situation providing the conditions for a transformation in the existing arrangements and the emergence of a conscious desire for such transformation among many people round the world. The subjective factor is as important as the objective one. There is, on the one hand, a struggle between two opposite

and powerful tendencies, one seeking to alter the framework of political and economic power, the other resisting such change by accommodating the more powerful among the new forces and, through such accommodation, trying to defeat the forces of revolutionary change. There is, on the other hand, a struggle going on in the minds of men, between an assertion of the utility of prevailing structures and the search for an alternative framework of human organization based on a new scale of values and priorities. There is a search, too, for new conceptions of development, power, technology and human destiny.

Movement for change

It is from this combination of struggle for a new order that is already on and the emerging search for an alternative framework of ideas and institutions that can provide the ongoing struggle with a sense of direction and purpose that a new historical epoch is likely to emerge. As was mentioned earlier, it is going to be a difficult and tortuous struggle. The conditions may be propitious, but the process is by no means assured. It calls for a widespread movement for change – in the developing countries, in the centres of industrial and military power, in the various world bodies, and in the framework of public opinion, attitudes and beliefs at various levels. Such a movement will have to encompass both the basic perception of the human condition in our time and the strategies for redesigning it. It will involve both an intellectual effort, aimed at reorienting basic concepts and interpretations of the objective reality, and a political effort, aimed at altering the framework of objective reality itself.

Furthermore, such a movement will have to be directed principally at two major components of the present scenario of tension between and within societies and, of course, cumulative injustice: (1) the arms race and the militarization of regimes and social structures; and (2) the structure of economic exploitation and political domination. The battle for demilitarization and an equitable and just order must first be fought and won in the minds of men. Without it, whatever gains may be made will be illusory, or ephemeral, or both. Demilitarization of the mind is a necessary prerequisite of demilitarization of regions and regimes. Without it, there will be no guarantee that even if some de-escalation of the arms race took place, it would not soon be reversed. Similarly, the struggle for economic equity and political autonomy must be waged at the level of consciousness and normative perception as well as in concrete situations of encounters of power and resources. Without it, there will be no guarantee that even if a just social order was created, it would not soon be toppled. Perceptions of reality more

often than not shape reality; they must undergo a profound change if changes in reality are to be successfully carried out and are to endure.

It should be realized that the power of the *status quo* has always been largely derived from its capacity to control subjective perceptions, beliefs and myths, and to induce in those who oppose it a feeling that the situation is hopeless, that the course of history is set, and that any attempt to change its course will only invite backlash and repression from those in control of institutions and channels of information and communication. A closer look at the historical situation will, however, show that it is the fear of change that terrifies those who preside at the *status quo*, especially when they know that it is becoming unstable and precarious. To prevent the upsetting of their apple-cart, they try to transmit their own fear of change among their opponents. It is for those who are opposed to the existing system to perceive the objective forces at work, canalize the discontent with the existing arrangements into a movement for change, inspire confidence in their ranks by building an oppositional movement based on a conception of an alternative future, and forge a coalition of interests opposed to the *status quo* with a view to engaging in a sustained intervention in the historical process.

Vision of an alternative future

The elements of an alternative perspective, proposed as a model for the future, are fairly well known and have been the subject of a great deal of writing and discussion in the last several years. It is a perspective based on the realization of a set of values. Important among these are minimization of violence and elimination of the war system; maximization of justice and equity in economic arrangements at both national and international levels; a decentralized and participant political structure, operating at various levels, with sufficient provision for the rights of individuals, minorities, dissidents and diverse social and national units; and a model of technology and development that is in keeping with an integral view of the natural environment and an equally integral view of human diversities and the distinctiveness of cultures.

Underlying this value-predisposition is a non-manipulative view of knowledge and of science. Integral to it is a view of prosperity and well-being that is non-acquisitive and that is restrained by a control of personal gratification and sensual desires, and an approach to power that ensures the widest possible sharing between, and participation of, diverse units, and unequivocally rejects the view of politics as a zero-sum game.

When we conceive of contemporary historical change as emanating from the end of Western domination, we have in mind more than a mere shift in the

regional balance of power. The end of the era of Western dominance must also mean an end of the dominant Western world-view based on the theory of progress and the ethic of individualism. It also means the abandonment of the related assumptions on the relationship between knowledge and power, on the ends of economic activity, and on the structure and management of politics and the nature of the state. Here, too, the basic point is not simply that the dominant Western paradigm, and the *praxis* based on it, violates the values stated above; it is also that they have ceased to be workable and are no longer valid.

There is need to move to a different approach to both the general theoretical paradigm of man-in-society and the *praxis* based on it. Such a paradigm and *praxis* should provide for, not just a more preferred structure of reality, but also for one that is conceptually more valid and, on simply pragmatic grounds, more stable and durable. The global movement for a just world discussed above thus becomes a comprehensive movement for change towards such a world, a movement that will provide a transition to a new kind of world system, a transition totally different from the one that is being forged by the Trilateralists in the US and other regions and their tactical collaborators in the socialist countries. Hence, the conception of this being an oppositional movement based on an alternative perspective.

A new coalition

This brings us to the central issue in the transition to an alternative future – namely, forging a coalition of interests opposed to the *status quo*. For the notion of a global movement is meaningless unless it takes into account the great divisions and the appalling disparities that characterize the present states system. There is, therefore, need both to support the struggle of the under-privileged and exploited stratum of the states system against the privileged and the exploiting stratum and to accept the fact of different and often opposite strategies adopted by differentially positioned groups of actors.

To think of globalism in a passive way (as simply emanating from the communications and technological revolutions that have a global reach, or as something forced by a perilous arms race that has a global sweep and hence calls for a global solution), or in terms of other pessimistic scenarios (such as 'limits to growth' because of a worsening relationship between population and resources and the consequent spectre of hunger and malnutrition) is an exercise in wishful thinking and is symptomatic of loss of will to face the real issues. And to plead, on the basis of such scenarios of the future, for global management of human affairs through co-operation and 'inter-dependence' (among the existing states and their ruling elites) is to acquiesce

in a foreclosure of all attempts to change the world order of the perveyors of the *status quo*. It is to accept defeat even before the battle for a structural transformation of the system has been joined.

The projected model of globalism and 'world order' seeks to perpetuate international hegemonies, class exploitation within and between nations, and structures of governance that are repressive and inhumane. Such an order is designed to ward off movements from below of exploited classes, peoples and nations and the assertion of their rights, including the right of national sovereignty and 'collective self-reliance' by countries whose economies and polities are affected by an international structure of domination and exploitation. Without such a combative self-assertion by exploited nations, *tied closely to movements for structural change within nations*, globalism and world orderism will remain a recipe for management of the globe through an oligarchy of governing elites. We must reject such a diabolical conception of globalism.

As pointed out earlier in this paper, even the idealistic and extremely well-meaning proponents of globalism and world order have unwittingly contributed to such a conception. Their view of nationalism and assertion of state power as inherently inimical to the attainment of a just and peaceful world does not take enough cognizance either of the deep divisions and antagonisms that characterize the present world or of the necessity of first dealing with them. Their enthusiastic support of the newfangled diversionary slogan of 'fulfilment of basic needs of the poor' and their near-contempt (unspoken, of course) for the political elites of the Third World have also served to legitimize a managerial and apolitical perspective on the world and its problems. We must reject both their analyses and prescriptions.

Instead, consciously and as an essential part of conceptualizing the *world problematique*, we should recognize the basic contradictions and historical antagonisms of the present world system and seek to make them the basis of a creative dialectic. We need to recognize, for instance, that movements of national self-determination and regional self-reliance in the Third World are necessary preconditions for a more just and humane world. And we need to recognize this as part of differential situations obtaining in different parts of the world, and consequent conflicts of interest between different national and regional groupings – the new setting of class conflict according to many.

The perception that the transformation of our time arises from the dis-integration of the nation-state system is, of course, not without an element of truth in it. But it is a perception that needs to be informed by another and deeper perception – namely, that the crisis we face is a crisis in the states system evolved in, and radiated from, Europe and that the challenge we face is one of moving towards a new states system, at once more diffuse and

participant and more co-operation-based and integrated. But it is not possible to move towards such a world without first going through the dialectic based on the counter-assertion of national and regional identities and solidarities through a new coalition of power comprising hitherto submerged political and economic entities, both in the Third World and elsewhere. As was stated in an important document of the World Order Models Project (WOMP):[3]

> The perspective on nationalism should be dependent on the context: what is to be urged or discouraged in a Northern industrial context obviously differs from the things that should be sought or avoided in Southern Africa, the Middle East, or South Asia. We are not for or against nationalism *per se*; it depends on its given roles in each context separately considered. State power may thwart equality in one part of the world and conceivably promote and protect it in another. What is true of nationalism and statism also applies to a variety of other 'isms' and 'movements': liberalism, feminism, peace movement, ecology movement. We cannot generalize beyond context, nor beyond the specific relation between means and ends necessary to bring a just world system into being. Very often difficult tradeoffs have to be made, and the perspective of one group may fail to impress another dominated by wholly different priorities, but there is no substitute for a politics that begins with the actual needs and aspirations of peoples in their various world situations. Unless this kind of messy politics with a variety of agendas is accepted as the basis for a transition movement, all efforts are bound to be parochial and futile. It is necessary to build from the interplay of diversities and linkages that are very much the essence of the contemporary world system. Those who defend the *status quo* seem able to put together that kind of coalition politics; progressive peoples and groups should surely be able to match capacity. Unless they do, the prospects for humane change will remain dubious indeed.[4]

A strategy of intervention

What should be the various components of such coalition politics, based on the 'interplay of diversity and linkages', together producing the movement for transition to a just world? Who are to be the principal agents of change? Who will work on what agenda? From what sites and at which levels of world reality will they work?

These questions take us beyond the *diagnosis* of the human problematique in our time (without which, of course, not much is possible) into 'what is to be done', by whom, and how? There is little doubt that the forces of change at

[3] An association of individuals and institutions throughout the globe engaged in research, education, dialogue, and action aimed at promoting a just world order embodying the values of peace, economic well-being, social justice and ecological balance. The author belongs to the core group of WOMP.

[4] *Montreal Statement*, presented to the meeting of WOMP scholars held at Montreal in 1975 (Mimeo).

work in our time shall, given the will and confidence and a perspective of history, transform the world.

Indicators of such change are many, and they cover a large spectrum of socio-political space. Among these are: (a) the growing sense of power in the Third World following decolonization made particularly salient by the economic challenge of OPEC and related phenomena; (b) the gathering crisis in global power relations, emanating from the last phase of national liberation movements, and the grim battle for the values of freedom and dignity in large parts of Africa and the Middle East; (c) the disenchantment of the intelligentsia, the youth and the unemployed round the world with the established order; (d) militant movements of civil disobedience and non-violent action against nuclear power and the thoughtless arms race; (e) the growing sentiment against the power and high technology of the multinationals, which undermine cultural diversity and indigenous traditions of freedom and self-reliance; (f) the alternatives movement at the grass roots of several societies affecting life-styles, institutional frameworks and cultural assumptions underlying the Western scientific and technological paradigm; (g) the secessionist movements in the North and the movements for civil and political rights of peoples and against authoritarian and collaborative regimes in the South; (h) the growing realization, in the UN bodies, on the part of independently inclined countries within both capitalist and socialist worlds as well as a growing number of international civil servants, of the imperative, on the one hand, to heed the just demands of the Third World and, on the other hand, to arrest the global spread of militarization and the technology of repression; and (i) the permeation of all this into the thinking of influential non-officials, religious leaders and the mass media in the imperial and metropolitan centres themselves.

There is little doubt that, while these forces of change are at work, powerful interests and entrenched elites are engaged in resisting any major reordering of power relations and patterns of economic and cultural domination. If the clash between these opposite tendencies is not to result in massive violence and repression, and if the world is to move towards a genuine alternative to the present states system and its technological and cultural apparatus, it is essential to devise a strategy of intervention that forces the *status quo* to yield to the forces of transformation in a manner that is less catastrophic and more constructive. This is not impossible, given the demonstrable defensiveness of the upholders of *status quo,* but it does call for a set of interventions from a variety of sites, resulting in a new coalition of interests and a *politics* that involves a large number of actors occupying strategic positions in various regions and at various levels. It is necessary that the interventions be based on an assessment of the unfolding historical process, and that they seek to strengthen certain processes (different in different parts of the world)

which are already under way but which may not yet be seen as complementary to each other and as part of a common endeavour. It is necessary to consciously perceive them as components of an overall strategy of intervention in the working of history and incorporate them in the movement for change.

Third World initiatives

The main spur to such a movement must without doubt come from the peoples of the Third World who have borne the brunt of more than two hundred years of virtually planned underdevelopment (planned by others) and are today victims of a global system of inequity and exploitation. The task facing these countries today is to actualize their known opportunities for throwing off the incubus of history. It is by now obvious that these opportunities cannot be utilized, much less optimized, unless the countries and regions of the Third World close ranks, lend a helping hand to each other, and deal unitedly with the threat of pre-emptive measures held out by the *status quo* powers.

Individually, most of these countries are vulnerable; collectively, they can be formidable. These countries constitute a majority of nation-states – representing a majority of the human race – and are in a position to command weight and respect in international forums. Also, between themselves the countries of the Third World encompass a wide range of capabilities, actual and potential, both in the domain of modern knowledge and its application and in the domain of traditional know-hows, models and technologies some of which are quite rich and sophisticated and have been evolved over centuries to deal with basic needs of human collectivities.

Somehow, the considerable scope for co-operation, joint exercises, collaborative research in alternative models, and the pooling of political visions and economic opportunities has not been explored. The notion that 'beggars' can't help each other is based not only on a colonized psyche that looks with indifference and even disdain at one's own and other Third World societies and peoples and with awe and deference at the Western and the socialist world. It is based also on ignorance of both the great diversity in levels of development between the countries of the Third World (some of these countries even suffer from surpluses which they do not know how to handle) and the rather limited scope of, and considerable frustration in, developing profitable economic relations with the industrialized world.

Even some of the proponents of the 'New International Economic Order' (NIEO) seem to suffer from the hang-over of the colonial mind, still seeking transfers of technology as well as greater allocations of aid from the industrialized countries. They put too little emphasis on pursuing lines

of co-operation among the Third World societies. (The Group of 77 itself suffers grievously from such an orientation.) It is only when the pursuit of a new international order is based primarily on mutual co-operation and the sense of Third World solidarity, and collective self-reliance that it generates, that the global structure of dependence and inequity can be ended, new paths of development based on new thinking developed, and a new confidence generated within the Third World. And once this happens, the elites of the Third World can feel more secure and, instead of turning their countries into military fortresses in a vast desert of economic misery and underdevelopment, direct their energies to discovering latent resources that lie beneath their lands and oceans, utilize their immense man-power for their economic betterment, and eventually find their rightful place and standing in the world by dint of their own strength.

Domestic transformation

Crucial to this whole effort is the ability of Third World countries to attend to their internal problems, to move rapidly toward economic policies that will raise levels of satisfaction, to develop durable political structures that can provide a sense of integral wholeness to diverse entities of language, tribe and religion without in any way undermining them, and to contain sources of turmoil and turbulence by evolving appropriate decentralized structures of participation. There is a close linkage between success on these fronts internally and success in achieving autonomy externally.

The concept of dependencia in explaining the present plight of the developing countries has been an important contribution of Latin American and African intellectuals to development theory. But it is necessary not to overstretch this concept. There is a serious danger of its being used as a total explanation of all Third World ills, and its being made into rationalization for inaction. Such an attitude is widely prevalent among Third World intellectuals who are prone to pass the responsibility for improving the state of their societies to the metropolitan centres. In a deep sense this is a survival of the colonial psychology. For the fact of the matter is that, historical analysis notwithstanding, 'they' can do little to improve the lot of the people in the Third World. The issue of autonomy cannot be resolved that way. It can be resolved by positive self-assertion in one's own arena, internal transformations inspired by fresh and indigenous thinking, integration of efforts between similarly placed countries and, overarching all this, struggle with external sources of exploitation and underdevelopment.

Indeed, quite a large part of the struggle for equity and basic human rights by deprived groups will need to be waged in domestic political and economic

settings. A 'new international order' is not possible without reordering domestic societies. This reordering is bound to affect the global framework of power. It will open up opportunities of undermining the present structures of dominance and dependence and defeating the new design of global management (we have seen that a crucial element of the proposed corporate world structure is the co-optation of dominant elites from the socialist and Third World societies). It will make it possible for Third World societies to move out of a uniform conception and a fixed paradigm of human development, born out of the age of European enlightenment and expanding outwards. As this happens, nations will begin to value alternative world-views and alternative paradigms of science and technology and civilizational perspectives, and, instead, draw upon them for the benefit of the world as a whole.

It seems that we are already at such a turning-point in history. There are several indicators of this: the awakening of consciousness and an emerging sense of potency among the powerless of the world; the rising tide of democratic aspirations in hierarchically structured societies; the spontaneous revulsion of millions of peoples against authoritarian regimes claiming their legitimacy in the name of 'progress' and 'modernization' – all or several of them exemplified by the sweeping defeat of Indira Gandhi in India in 1977 and by the Iranian Revolution against the powerful Shah in 1979. One consequence of such an awakening at the grass-roots of societies is a fundamental delegitimization of age-old institutions, symbols and myths. Another is the emerging awareness of the existence of like-minded peoples in neighbouring countries and even more distant parts of the world, and of opportunities for forging new modes of co-operation for building a more humane world. This *has* to happen first domestically in a few centres and then, by the weight of example and demonstrated capacities for change and aggregation of new experiences, in the world at large. In any event, the reordering of the international order and the existing states system will depend crucially on fundamental transformations in the domestic social, economic and political structures of Third World countries.

A very large number of these societies carry the burden of enormous excretions of the historical process, large pools of stagnant and oppressive social structures, and, in many cases, *indigenous* traditions of centralization, militarism and structural violence. All these have received a new lease on life from the contemporary global conditions of scarcity and plunder and exploitation as well as from the intense rivalry for local status and power in the face of new ideologies of social transformation and human dignity. Without in any way succumbing to cultural and technological invasions from outside, there is need to put one's own house in order and to operationalize the values one stands for in regional

and international forums in one's own local setting.

Indeed, this is the only real setting available to one for initiating any movement for change, including a global movement. In this lies the true source of legitimacy for waging a larger movement at other levels. The rhetoric of confrontation that at present envelops the reality of a deep sense of inferiority and frustration in the Third World will then give place to a dignified and responsible posture that is derived from real strength gained through common effort aimed at undoing the deep dualism of the present world. This will also make it possible to identify areas of common interest between the Third World and the rest of the world, giving rise to a new structure of international co-operation.

Global alliance for a new international order

The rationale for such co-operation is already being articulated on grounds other than a romantic or a manipulative predisposition towards globalism. The re-emergence of the spectre of scarcity in the Western world, the realization of 'inverse dependence' of the West on raw-material producing nations (and the uncovering of the West's vulnerability), the perception that shortages of essential resources and maladies like unemployment and chronic inflation – even hunger – are global in scope and reflect a basic crisis in technological capitalism, and, above all, the widespread consensus on the danger of a limitless arms race arising out of relentless competition for global and regional hegemonies – all are leading to a growing sense of crisis, not only among sensitive thinkers of the West, but also in larger currents of public opinion and influential political groups in the Western world.

As such a sense of crisis spreads, it should be possible to drive home the point that extremes of inequity are not only morally indefensible but politically unwise, and that if a global class war is to be avoided it is necessary to accept the compelling logic of the spokesmen of, and for, the Third World for restructuring the international economic and political order. It is a logic that should make sense first of all to those in the Western countries who have waged, and are waging, a struggle for equity at home. There is already evidence of the growth of a new kind of global humanism in some of these countries – Scandinavia, the Netherlands and other smaller European countries – where the voices of reason and compassion and the values of equity and justice have struck roots in domestic policy-making and can therefore be extended to the formulation of foreign policy as well. These countries also supply a number of devoted individuals working in UN agencies, international organizations involved in North-South economic relations, and in a variety of

non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In a number of other countries, too, there are sizeable and fairly influential groups that are pressing for a positive relationship with the Third World – in the new regimes of Spain, Portugal and Greece, in the UK and Canada, and even France, though here the reasons are more complex.

It is necessary to both deepen and broaden this humanism (which still tends to be conceived in static forms such as foreign aid and technology transfer) into the forging of a political alignment that springs from a clearer understanding of a common stake in moving towards a new world order, and that is alive to the need for sustained co-operation to achieve that end. A majority of the countries of Europe – not merely in Western but also in Eastern Europe – can contribute a lot to such a consummation, if they choose to move away from being passive partners of the two military giants that have held the whole world to ransom for a quarter century to being active partners with the great civilizations of the South, with whom they have in the long run much more in common than with these giants.

As such a new alignment takes shape, the importance of military power will be reduced, and it may become possible to move towards global disarmament. The real danger to the world arises less from diffusion of power, at which Western strategists seem to be worried, than from its immense concentration – and that, too, in a largely physical form. The diffusion also has its dangers so long as it is largely physical and military. As the diffusion spreads along economic, technological and social dimensions, and finds its moorings in a widely shared set of values, it should pave the way for greater confidence at all levels and, on that basis, a greater and more genuine sense of common destiny.

Reordering the world compass

What was implicit in the foregoing should be made explicit here. The mobilization of international support for deconcentration and diffusion of power in the world arena, and the concomitant changes in the techno-economic structures of the world, should necessarily extend to the communist world. Here, too, with the break-down of the old monolith and the emergence of a more plural structure (as in the Western world), there is a growing concern with the reordering of world economic and political relations. There is need now to enlist this latent support in the communist world for active partnership in the new alignment for global change. The point that needs to be driven home with respect to these countries is that their commitment to socialist transformation needs to be once again affirmed in global terms. This will involve a shift in the old doctrine of a world revolution by taking cognizance

of the regionalization of global class conflict. It entails moving towards a more eclectic strategy of global change so that it is sensitive to the aspirations of the Third World. It involves their active participation in the North–South debate, in international economic institutions, and in the non-aligned movement. The role of Yugoslavia in this respect is, of course, critical and widely recognized. But it should not be difficult to persuade countries as far removed in their respective ideological stances on the East–West conflict as Rumania and Cuba to support the movement for a new international order. Indeed, the political isolation of the two countries, and others like them, on the East–West axis can be broken by their more open involvement in the North–South axis. This will contribute significantly to global change.

Of particular importance in this respect is the role of China. Thanks partly to its preoccupation with the Soviet Union and partly to its search for a place in the global framework of technological and military power (a framework that was first laid out by the West and then accepted by the Soviet Union), China poses the danger of playing a counter-revolutionary role in the global struggle for a more just and equitable world order. It is necessary that the quite considerable links that countries of the Third World have with China should be utilized to make China resume its revolutionary role in the North–South dimension of world politics, even if it is forced to join forces with the US and other Western countries in the East-West conflict.

Significant actors

In this process of channelling elements in the East–West conflict for re-ordering the techno-economic and political power relations along the North–South axis, an important role will have to be played by the emerging power centres in the Third World itself. The major centres of wealth and power in the Middle East and other important members of the OPEC, new regional groupings (such as the ASEAN bloc of countries, provided they act in close co-operation with Vietnam, on the one hand, and India, on the other), and countries like India are all capable of exercising leverage in restructuring global and regional balances, especially in respect of trade and commodity flows, production of basic necessities and raw materials, competition for markets, as well as in respect of military and strategic matters.

Several factors have combined to enable India in particular to move out of its rather limited role as a regional power and take on a global role: its pivotal position in the non-aligned movement, its consistent support of liberation movements in Africa, its network of economic and technical co-operation in Asia and Africa, its potential for making an imaginative use of its scientific, industrial and nuclear capabilities, and its political and moral stance in the

United Nations and on issues like disarmament and human rights. In the years to come, it can re-establish close ties with China, respond to revolutionary and democratic movements in the Persian gulf region, and, along with China, try to draw Japan into Asian economic reconstruction.

The issue before the emerging centres of economic and political power in the Third World is this: are they going to be co-opted in the world order of *status quo*, or are they going to align themselves with the forces of change and revolution? Intellectuals of these regions and leaders of various progressive movements (anti-poverty movements, human-rights movements, alternative-technology movements) should see to it that they choose the latter, not the former.

Penetrating the centre

If the alliance for change laid out above takes effect, it should be possible to influence the thinking and action even at the heart of the present system. A combination of the centrifugal pulls at the monoliths over which they preside with their reduced capacity to co-opt regional powers can well make the superpowers themselves see reason in the demands for reordering existing economic and political relations along both the North-South and the East-West axes of the world compass.

The Soviet Union has been deflected, over the last two decades, from playing its role as a revolutionary world power, thanks largely to its excessive fear of the technological and military superiority of the West. True, it still continues to support liberation movements in the Third World; true, also, that it has, on balance, aligned itself with the Third World on many issues. But, at the same time, it has been indifferent to the prevailing inequitable world order, and at least on two critical dimensions – the struggle for a new economic order and the Third World stance on the questions of nuclear proliferation and global disarmament – it has supported the *status quo* position. It has also occasionally used some Third World countries as pawns in its global power game. In consequence, detente between the two superpowers has turned out to be a device for freezing the North-South divide. It is necessary that pressure be mounted on the Soviet Union by Third World countries whose friendship it needs badly – India, Vietnam, Angola, the liberation fronts in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa, and, above all, Cuba – for enlisting its support on behalf of the pro-changers in the North-South conflict.

Even in the United States and among its allies there is scope for building public opinion against the *status quo* as well as against policies designed to undermine the forces of change that are emerging in various parts of the world. The fact that these are liberal democracies does not guarantee that

such public opinion will necessarily influence official policies. The capacity of bourgeois governments to manipulate their peoples – and the peoples of other nations – through corporate structures of economic and technological power and communications media is well known. Yet, in a plural polity there is a possibility of influencing opinion at various levels and instilling some realism in official and semi-official thinking.

Thus, the very fact that the powers that be in the US and in other Western democracies find it necessary to employ the rhetoric of 'reconstructing the world order' and to keep in check their capacity to mount a backlash against the economically powerful or the ideologically left-wing regimes in the Third World suggests that they no longer take Western pre-eminence for granted. The fact that military strategists in the West are anxious about the growing diffusion of technological and strategic power into the Third World regions lends support to the inference. The task before the Third World influential centres, before China, and politically visible dissident groups and movements within the US and Western Europe is to strengthen the more liberal and globally sensitive lobbies in the US. The voice of the global alliance for change must ultimately penetrate the very apex of the present world order. There should be no illusion about this being an easy task. But if the present structures of inequity are to be shaken, and if the frightening concentration of military and strategic power is to be brought to an end, there is no escape from extending the movement for a just world to the United States itself.

Catalysts of change

In delineating the various components of the politics of global transformation, we have deliberately focused attention so far on the reordering of the states system. For, despite the growing realization among the leaders of opinion round the world of the necessity of change, and despite a significantly positive shift in subjective predispositions and preferences of large segments of the global population that may come about through the cumulative influence of various movements of change, a just world order will remain in the realm of utopia. It is only when an impact has been made on the world political processes such that it leads to the emergence of a new coalition of interests powerful enough to reorder the *structure* of authority and power in the world that a just world order will have moved from the realm of utopia to the realm of action.

There is little doubt that the efficacy of movements for change depends crucially on a proper understanding of the forces of change that are already at work. Much depends, too, on a coherent theory of intervention for translating potentiality into reality. For, while no historical change ever comes

about by merely wishing it (because it is determined by specific changes in the structure of reality), its precise direction, as also the extent of human suffering involved in it, depends very much on a conscious intervention by a set of actors informed by a clear perspective and a clear vision and possessed of a vibrant sensibility to the hard choices involved in the intervention.

In fact, the movement for intervention in the global structure will have to be thought of as a *process* involving constant interaction between ideational and activist work, between opinion catalysts and mass mobilizers and political decision-makers, between the paradigm of thought and the paradigm of action. This is the way all major structural changes and cultural trans-formations have come about.

The role of the intelligentsia in this process is indeed crucial. It is in this stratum of society that identities transcending individual, group, class and national interests are to be found – identities that are conscious of the conflicts generated by the historical process, of the irrationality and injustice of the *status quo*, and of the necessity of change.

Needless to say, not all intellectuals have developed the capacity of trans-cending the boundaries of narrow interests for the sake of more global communities of interest. As a matter of fact, a very large number of highly educated people with a middle class background, including a wide array of scientists and professionals, are employed for defending the prevailing institutional order, perfecting the instruments of domination, and for providing expertise to repressive regimes, military establishments, multi-national corporations and international institutions designed to perpetuate the *status quo*. And yet, it is from the intellectual and scientific community that new ideas about ordering society based on a holistic perspective on the human condition, integrating diverse trends into a comprehensive framework of analysis and action can emerge. The need for intellectuals to do so is urgent now as never before. They should use their demonstrated capacity to rise above narrow class and sectional interests at the service of larger causes in different domains – anti-colonial, civil rights, anti-war and environment movements, the struggle for emancipation of workers and peasants and the poor in general, women's rights movement in the West, integrationist movements at national and regional levels in the Third World. They will thus provide a new cultural orientation for a comprehensive global movement for a just world.

Once such a coalition of the various movements of ideas is joined in terms of a larger community of interest and acquires an identity (provided, of course, that it has a clear and candid perception of the conflicts that are inherent in the situation and that must be dealt with and resolved through a set of policy initiatives and action profiles), it should not be difficult to relate the same to the emergent coalition of power for moving towards a new international

political and economic order. Intellectuals have a major role to play in catalysing this process.

The catalytic role of the intellectual and scientific community spelt out above is more or less in line with what was delineated in earlier periods by men as diverse as Marx (with his conception of de-classing and his definition of the task of philosophers as world changers), Mannheim (with his idea of 'freefloating intelligentsia' engaged in a global movement for 'fundamental democratization'), and Gandhi (with his indictment of the middle classes for their over-intellectualization and his call to them to find their salvation through identifying with the struggling masses). At the same time, it is necessary to insist once again that mere enlightenment and commitment to change are insufficient conditions for change, and are often likely to lead to idealistic images of the future which, because they are not grounded in real confrontations, may turn out to be either wholly utopian or, as argued earlier in respect of the advocates of world order, may play in the hands of the strategists of a new imperial design.

The point is to link the domain of ideas, with its normative and didactic interventions, to the domain of action in which various movements for transformation are already engaged. This will serve to bring to the latter a sense of the larger struggle for a more equitable and just world. The role of the intellectual in history is a modest one, though no doubt critical. It is limited to catalysing possibilities that are latent in the situational reality, making them part of the stream of consciousness, and propelling interventions in the light of such consciousness by those whose vocation it is to act and intervene.

Let us then locate the intellectual task in the framework of the ongoing movements for change. There is no space here to discuss any of these in detail, and all we can do is to identify important movement groups in different parts and at various levels that have some relevance to the global movement for a just world.

Movements for change: their tasks

There is already evidence of the globalization of concern on major issues that divide the world and cry for consensus on the actions needed to compose the differences and conflicts so that national and international bodies can work towards a common framework of policy and action. This is suggested by the series of world conferences on environment, population, food, water, habitat, law of the sea, desertification, employment, science and technology, status of women and condition of the child, besides the special sessions of the

UN General Assembly on a new international economic order, disarmament, and a new international development strategy for the 1980s. The task is to move from endless debate on vital issues – which can, and do in fact, often become a device for defusing energy and blocking the forces for change from gaining momentum – to consciously relating informed opinion and action to various movements for change and making them part of a more comprehensive movement for a just world.

Peace, disarmament and anti-militarism

There exists a widespread peace movement, especially in the North (in both the Western world and Eastern Europe as well as in Japan and Australasia). There is also a growing movement in these countries, including non-violent non-co-operation, against nuclear power both in its military and in its civilian forms. To these should be joined the activities of a wide variety of groups concerned with the growing militarization of the Third World. This militarization has serious implications for regional peace and solidarity, autonomy of these regions falling prey to a new dependency based on wholesale transfers of arms and military technology, and, above all, for the growth of repressive regimes in the Third World bolstered by the strategists of world hegemony who are seeking to meet the challenge of the Third World by introducing or strengthening the virus of militarism and fantasies of regional hegemony.

There is a tendency among Third World intellectual and political leaders to think of disarmament as a problem for the rich countries alone, and to take a back seat in negotiations on it. Nothing could suit the superpowers and their allies better. Because their domination over the world power structure depends crucially on the perpetuation of the world military order, they are keen to co-opt new centres of power into it. This is what accounts for the relative unpreparedness of Third World governments at the time of the UN Special Session on Disarmament in 1978, for which they had been long clamouring, and for their failure to wrest any commitments from the superpowers. It is essential to coalesce the movement for global peace and disarmament, the movement against nuclearization in the Western and Eastern segments of the North, and the struggle against militarism in the Third World, and then to relate them all to the more generic movement for a just world.

Equity and justice

We have in this paper dwelt at length on the emerging struggle for greater

equity in distribution of resources, control over techno-economic relations, and the institutional framework for a new international order. We would only like to add that there is a close interrelationship between the spectre of militarism and the spectre of poverty and inequity. War and militarism cannot be wiped out in an unjust world, one in which large-scale technology and ostentatious consumption standards of one segment of the world makes even moderate rates of development and minimum standards of living in another segment unrealizable. Meanwhile, the bottling up of global resources in a mad race for military and technological prowess *within* the North makes both peace and the eradication of poverty on a global scale equally unrealizable. It is essential, therefore, to link the movements for disarmament and demilitarization to the movements for economic justice and technological reform.

Alternatives in development

Such a perspective on a common struggle for peace and justice at the level of the macro structures of the world should find a very large constituency of support across the world's regions in thousands of groups operating at micro levels and the grass-roots of society. All of these want to move away from the murderous course on which the new corporatism – based, as pointed out early in this paper, on new conceptions of statism, technological capitalism, global militarism and transnational intelligence networks – is set. Literally hundreds of thousands of the world's youth, scientists, ecologists and plain seekers of a more humane quality of life are engaged in fascinating experiments with new sources of energy, more wholesome technology, recycling of resources, austere life-styles and a conception of community that is at once global and mindful of cultural diversity and individual freedom. Equally important are the experiments, again being pursued all over the world, in alternative modes of education, systems of health and housing, and the planning of human space and ecosystems of town and country.

Alternatives in development should not be perceived as just a path to be followed by Third World societies alone because of their different factor combinations. They must be perceived rather as a movement that has a world-wide relevance, given the fact that it has grown out of the excesses to which modern man has pushed technology and the science of economics all over the world. Without such a universal perspective, there is little chance of the movement succeeding. For Third World countries will refuse to be treated as 'second class citizens' of the world and will predictably engage in the suicidal path of 'catching up' with the so-called 'developed' world, in the process joining the race to hasten the collapse of the biosphere, the demise of the integrity of diverse cultures – and ultimately of civilization itself.

There is need, therefore, for *a new social contract* between world regions in which, while the essential infrastructures of agrarian and industrial productivity and devices that put an end to human drudgery are to be widely shared, there is also an agreement on limits to the more wasteful, socially inequitable and environmentally hazardous techno-systems and consumer life-styles. Once such a social contract is arrived at, the various micro experiments will cease to be movements of marginalized or dissident groups; they will begin to contribute to the larger stream of consciousness concerned with creating a more humane world. In a world torn by massive inequity and the war system, it is difficult to appreciate the fundamental search in which the grass-roots experimenters are engaged; they are seeking to find answers to the serious problems of the present to avoid a horrendous future, a future that is more likely than not to visit us fairly soon unless the movements for disarmament and development and the new international order build into their agenda a concern with science and technology, the environment, and life-styles. It is only with such convergence that the more comprehensive movement for a just world can acquire momentum and depth.

Socio-economic movements and the NIEO

It would be a serious mistake to think of the movement for a just world in terms of strict rationality, as something that everyone will agree with if only they saw reason – in short, as an essentially managerial and technical exercise. It is important to remember that all such movements are essentially political, that they span major areas of conflict in which the purveyors of the *status quo* will seek to prevent any major transformation of the present order. This applies as much, and perhaps even more, to alternative conceptions of technology, life-style, education and health and systems of planning, especially if they are not limited to the Third World and are designed to coalesce with the struggle for a new international order. Thus, it is interesting to note that the establishment in the Western world became highly receptive to the basic needs approach to development only after they saw the demand for a new international order gaining ground and challenging the existing states system and corporate power. They would likewise be willing to go along with the self-reliance school in the Third World; for it, like the basic needs school, leaves the global structure of power and resources largely unaffected. For the same reason, they would support 'intermediate' or 'appropriate' technology for the Third World.

Hence the need to conceive of the alternatives movement as an essential part of a global movement for a just world. And the same applies to the basic needs and self-reliance schools of thought. While these concepts are of great

value in correcting domestic imbalances and inequities and states of economic dependence – we have argued early in this section that this is the crucial arena for any movement of change – they should not be allowed to be used for perpetuating global dualism and quarantining the South from the cosy affluence and political stability of the North. All such movements – alternatives in development, basic needs, self-reliance – should be seen as parts of the global struggle for justice, never in isolation.

Sectoral movements

By the same token, it is necessary to build into the larger framework of the movement various movements of an earlier vintage which seem to have lost relevance of late but which are essential to any struggle for equity and justice. The most important among these is the struggle of the working class, but no less important are the youth movements in various parts of the world, the peasant movements, the movements of minorities in multi-racial and multi-ethnic societies, and the movement for women's rights in urban industrialized societies. Now many of these movements are in danger of being co-opted by the managers of the *status quo*. Trade unions are found to be militant opponents of the rights of the unemployed – the immigrants and the rural poor who are outside the organized sector; they seem to have lost their earlier militancy and have acquired a stake in the capitalist order. Their short-term calculations have cut them adrift from the global struggle against poverty and injustice. The same applies, though in different forms, to the youth, civil rights and women's movements for greater equality within the national settings of capitalist societies. Although, no doubt, in each more global perspectives have been held out by some enlightened advocates of the cause, especially by those who also happen to participate in transnational interactions, all are, more often than not, highly ethno-centric in their perceptions; and all have failed to detach themselves from the highly competitive ethos of Western egalitarianism which militates against a truly global perspective.

It is essential to mobilize these powerful unionist strains in Western capitalism by invoking new symbols for their militancy and by disabusing them of the misleading calculus they have been led to believe in. According to the Marxist analysis, for instance, the proportionate share in national income and wealth of the working classes in Western Europe has remained more or less static despite the rapid strides made by these societies, that the increase in their absolute living standards has been largely at the expense of the world's poor and unemployed (including those at home), and that the real beneficiaries of both domestic increase in productivity and international

transfers have been the world's middle classes – against whom they should be waging their battles. Behind the domination of the global middle class are the multinational corporations that have spread technologies making at once for a sprawling tertiary sector (not least in poor societies) and for massive unemployment, in the process stimulating in the working classes of affluent societies the craving for a middle class life-style – and the fine gradations of socio-economic status that go with it – instead of finding common cause with the underprivileged and unorganized masses of the world.

It is necessary to raise the consciousness of the working classes, as of the industrial youth, the mechanized peasantry and the middle class women in the West to these facts so that they become, in course of time, sensitive to these and other perceptions. Their various movements must not be allowed to be deflected from the basic struggle for restructuring world economic and political relations. A clear prerequisite of this is for them to show a willingness to accept moderation in life-styles and to accept, too, that beyond a point a higher living standard is not worth striving for. This will not be easy, given the differentials in living standards, but it must be insisted upon in any drive for mobilizing the unionized elements of the industrialized countries into the global movement for a just world.

These tasks appear more formidable than they actually will be in the years and decades to come. For, failing a new global contract across the regions, and social classes within regions, there is little doubt that a fierce struggle for world resources will inevitably ensue. The Third World countries may have to go through a lot of turmoil, but the affluent world will suffer no less from increasing recession, unemployment and inflation, which together will put an end to the optimism of the last few decades and give rise to strifes between social classes, ethnic groups and subnational identities. The true dimensions of conflict will then dawn on the less privileged strata in the affluent world, and on the working class in general, forcing them to find common cause with the struggle of the Third World and oppressed people everywhere. It is to be hoped that they do not wait till the zero hour when there will be a total breakdown of the old order amidst large-scale violence and chaos. It is to be hoped that much before that the rising consciousness round the world of the ills of the present world order and the widely felt need to close ranks to deal with them will permeate them so that they make a positive contribution to a world-wide movement for a just world.

Human rights

Perhaps the most potent source of change in the world, and one that may push the myriad struggles for a just world into a truly global movement, will

come from an altogether different source: the rising tide of the movement for democratic rights in various regions of the world involving large masses of people (reference to which was made above under 'domestic transformation'). Modernization of societies has produced deep schisms everywhere, leading to massive discontent and alienation and a decline in the legitimacy of constitutional authority. Through a curious dialectic, though, the doctrine of modernity has implanted in people two powerful drives. One is the assertion of indigenous cultural identities. The other is a quest for equality and, as an aspect of this, social and spatial mobility, cutting at the roots of both traditional and modern hierarchies and discrimination on grounds of race, class, caste, language, sex and age. It is a new combination – exemplified so vividly in the high drama of the Iranian Revolution – that is likely to provide a more human and holistic anchor of culture and civilization to the various movements of economic and political change.

The movement for 'human rights' has to be conceived in the broadest possible sense and taken out of the politics of detente and other Machiavellian uses to which it is being currently put. It should include in its span democratic upsurge against authoritarian rulers. It should include movements for civil rights and 'reverse discrimination' of ethnic and religious minorities, caste groups and subnational entities, including secessionist movements in blatantly unequal unions of nationalities. It should include class-based movements for democratic participation, within and across nations. The divisive tendencies planted by multinational corporations must be countered by the growth of multinational trade unions and fraternal movements for economic rights of the exploited classes. Above all, the struggle of the poor and the unorganized millions round the world for economic survival, for the right to work, and for security and job tenure must be included in the movement for human rights if it is to have any meaning for humanity as a whole. And, last but not least, it should include the increasing search for cultural authenticity and human dignity in a variety of ethno-religious settings.

Conclusion

We have in this paper provided the elements of an emergent coalition of ideas, interests and institutional initiatives towards global transformation – emergent but by no means already there, as yet more potential than real, but at the same time embedded in the dialectic of history. We have deliberately not dwelt on the kind of international and global institutions that would emerge out of such transformation, for we are interested less in providing a model for the future than in outlining a process of intervention for moving

towards a world in which violence, inequity, exploitation and technological tyranny can be minimized. This process of intervention – by the diverse movements for change which, taken together, can provide the politics of a global transformation – will throw up the structures and institutions that are immanent in the specific historical situation.

It must be admitted, as was made clear earlier in this paper, that the politics of global transformation cannot be consummated except by the intervention in the states system itself by governmental and political elites. But it is our view that this is too important a matter to be left to governments alone. Governments generally act when the force of opinion and the weight of political pressure force them in certain directions. Our conception of a new coalition of interests engaging in the politics of global transformation is thus based on an interpenetration of both governmental and non-governmental actors. The span of the latter ranges from intellectuals to movement groups operating at the grass-roots, to the peoples of the world themselves.